

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 AID-05
IGA-02 EURE-00 /091 W
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P R 211226Z MAR 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9412
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AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2070

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: LABOR "UNITY OF ACTION" GROUP DISINTEGRATING?

SUMMARY: THE LABOR "UNITY OF ACTION" GROUPING THAT INCLUDES
THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS (SWC), THE
SOCIALIST UGT AND THE SMALLER CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST USO HAS
APPARENTLY BEEN SPLIT WIDE OPEN BY A DISPUTE AMONG ITS
MEMBERS, AND OBSERVERS ARE PREDICTING AN EARLY DEMISE OF
THE COS. THE UGT HAS APPARENTLY PROVOKED THIS SPLIT BY
DEMANDING THAT OTHER GROUPS, ALL NON-COMMUNISTS OR ANTI-
COMMUNISTS, LIKE THE ANARCHO-SYNDICAL CNT OR BASQUE STV,
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BE INCLUDED IN ANY JOINT LABOR ACTIVITIES, FURTHER DIMINISHING
COMMUNIST INFLUENCE. ANOTHER UGT DEMAND THAT STRIKES AT
THE HEART OF THE WORKERS' COMMISSIONS STRATEGY WOULD
REQUIRE TRADE UNIONISTS TO STEP DOWN FROM ANY POSITIONS
IN THE OLD "OFFICIAL" SSO SYNDICAL STRUCTURE. THE COS
HAS BEEN MORIBUND FOR SOME TIME, BUT ITS FINAL DEMISE WOULD
BE A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT AND MIGHT ALSO EASE THE WAY FOR

THE GOVT TO COME THROUGH IN ITS PROMISE TO PROVIDE GUARANTEES FOR UGT FINANCING ON THE BASIS OF A FUTURE RETURN OF UGT ASSETS CONFISCATED BY THE FRANCO-REGIME DURING THE CIVIL WAR. END SUMMARY.

1. AN APPARENTLY STORMY MEETING MARCH 16 OF THE COS (COORDINADORA DE ORGANIZACIONES SINDICALS-THE "UNITY OF ACTION" NATIONAL MECHANISM GROUPING THE UGT, WORKERS' COMMISSION/SWC, AND USO) HAS SHARPLY ACCENTUATED THE GROWING SPLIT BETWEEN THE UGT ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE SWC AND USO ON THE OTHER. THE MEETING HAD BEEN CALLED TO WORK OUT A JOINT APPEAL TO WORKERS A) TO PROTEST AGAINST THE NEW LABOR DECREE (MADRID 1715) AND B) TO CAMPAIGN FOR EARLY TRADE UNION FREEDOM (READ LEGALIZATION). THE ATTEMPT FOUNDERED WHEN SWC AND USO REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE UGT CONDITION THAT THE CAMPAIGN INCLUDE THE PROVISION THAT ANY TRADE UNIONIST HOLDING A POSITION IN THE VERTICAL SSO (SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION) STRUCTURE SHOULD RESIGN. SWC AND USO, UNLIKE UGT, HAVE FOLLOWED THE STRATEGY OF USING THE SSO (PRINCIPALLY THE SSO-SPONSORED PLANT COMMITTEES) TO PURSUE THEIR "DEMOCRATIZATION AIMS." THE UGT HAD MADE THE ADDITIONAL POINT (ALSO REJECTED) THAT SUCH AN APPEAL -- OF CONCERN TO ALL WORKERS -- SHOULD BE MADE BY THE LARGEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL UNIONS, AND SPECIFICALLY SUGGESTED THE INCLUSION OF THE ANARCHO-SYNDICAL CNT, THE BASQUE STV, AND THE CATALAN SOC. SWC AND USO SUBSEQUENTLY WITHDREW THEIR OBJECTION TO AN EXPANDED LABOR MEETING IN VIEW OF THE STALEMATE WITHIN COS, AND SUCH A GATHERING MAY OCCUR MARCH 21.

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2. IN A SEPARATE PRESS RELEASE PUBLISHED MARCH 17 (SWC AND USO ISSUED THEIR OWN JOINT VERSION OF THE COS MEETING), THE UGT DECLARED: "THE COS, IF NOT DEAD, IS MORIBUND. IN ANY CASE, THE UNITY OF ACTION CONCEPT ASSOCIATED WITH COS CAN BE PRACTICED OUTSIDE OF ITS EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE OTHER LABOR CENTERS. THE COS IS NOT AND END IN ITSELF." A UGT SPOKESMAN ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WAS "GREAT DISCONTENT" WITHIN THE UGT RANK AND FILE WITH RESPECT TO REMAINING IN AN ORGANIZATION SUCH AS COS, WHICH WAS LARGELY INEFFECTUAL. PRESS TREATMENT SUGGESTS LITTLE OPTIMISM THAT COS CAN SURVIVE THIS DISPUTE. BOTH LIBERAL LEFT EL PAIS AND GOVERNMENT-LINE (SSO) PUEBLO USED THE "COS MORIBUND" CAPTION, WHILE BARCELONA'S VANGUARDIA CAPTIONED ITS ACCOUNT: "COS EACH TIME CLOSER TO DISINTEGRATION." IN A DIFFERENT NOTE, A USO SPOKESMAN REPORTEDLY BLAMED THE UGT'S ATTITUDE ON INTERNATIONAL LABOR PRESSURE.

3. COMMENT. THE UGT HAS TOLD US ON NUMEROUS OCCAISONS

THAT THEY WERE GRADUALLY "DISENGAGING" THEMSELVES FROM THE COS WHICH THEY BELIEVED HAD OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS. IT IS NO SECRET THAT THE GOVT HAS BEEN UNHAPPY ABOUT UGT ASSOCIATION WITH COMMUNIST LABOR ELEMENTS IN THE COS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, SYNDICAL RELATIONS MINISTER DE LA MATA ONLY RECENTLY COMMENTED TO THE UGT THAT ITS CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP IN COS CAUSED HIM GREAT PROBLEMS WHEN HE WAS "DEFENDING UGT INTERESTS" IN DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE GOVT (MADRID 1025). THAT SIGNIFICANT COMMENT VERY PROBABLY REFLECTED A GOS "PRICE" FOR HELPING THE UGT GET OFF THE GROUND, AND IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE UGT HAS TAKEN HEED. IN ORDER TO PROTECT ITSELF AGAINST COMMUNIST CHARGES THAT THEY OPPOSE "LABOR UNITY," THE UGT HAS PRUDENTLY TAKEN THE INITIATIVE IN CALLING FOR AN EXPANDED TRADE UNION GROUP TO DISCUSS COMMON PROBLEMS. THE INCLUDING OF THE STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST CNT AND STV IN THIS ENLARGED LABOR FORM, IF IT IS CREATED WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REDUCE COMMUNIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3047584
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR \"UNITY OF ACTION\" GROUP DISINTEGRATING? SUMMARY: THE LABOR \"UNITY OF ACTION\" GROUPING THAT INCLUDES THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIO NS (SWC)
TAGS: ELAB, SP, UNITY OF ACTION
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbcc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3fafd4b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009